

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PARTNER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 8, 2020

5:00 PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Will Schoefmann, Vice Chair
Dawn Thomas-Smith
Dr. Delene White
Mari Brunner
Michael Giacomo, Councilor
George S. Hansel, Mayor

Staff Present:

Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison

Members Not Present:

Kürt Blomquist
John Mitchell, Chair

1) Call to Order

Vice Chair Schoefmann read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency. He called the meeting to order at 5:08 PM.

2) Roll Call – Appoint Alternates

Roll call was conducted.

3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting – July 14, 2020

Mayor Hansel made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 14, 2020. Ms. Thomas-Smith seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

4) Board Business

a) Planning for Future Exchanges with Einbeck

1. *Exchanges – YMCA, Dance, Rugby*

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked if the group wanted to have more discussion about these topics today. He asked if people had other concepts to talk about.

Ms. Brunner asked if this group is interested, since they cannot do in-person exchanges for a while, in the possibility of a pen pal program. She continued that they would have to see if there were any interested classes or schools. It would be something they could do during the pandemic. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that that sounds like a neat idea, if they could find a class of students that might be interested. Ms. Brunner replied that they would have to see if there were partners in Einbeck. She continued that she is pretty new to this committee and does not personally have connections in Einbeck, but she was thinking, if there was a fourth grade class here, say, and a fourth grade class in Einbeck, they could write letters back and forth, or emails. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that there might be opportunities with Zoom or something similar, maybe for the committee or a class of students. He continued that they could explore how to do virtual meetups, to keep the connections going and put some faces to names. He asked for others' thoughts.

Dr. White stated that she thinks Ms. Brunner has a good idea; she would be in favor of trying that. She continued that one thing that comes to mind, since Ms. Brunner brought up fourth graders, is the city museum in Einbeck – she follows it on Instagram and it has fun, child-friendly activities going on to learn about Einbeck's history and engage in art. Perhaps they would be interested in doing something, using something like Zoom, so people in Keene could learn from what they are doing in Einbeck. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that he knows there is a group that has documented the history of trails being developed; it is a pretty neat historical presentation. Something like that could be a live Zoom presentation, and/or they could give people links to things they could explore on their own, too, about the Keene community. It would be a way of reaching out and could help with this void of physical exchanges. It is something to talk about; they could do some legwork outside of the meeting.

Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that she thinks this is great. She continued that she is remembering Fuller School had elementary students do something like that. Maybe Chair Mitchell's students who were supposed to go this year could connect with Einbeck students, since those connections have already started to be made. She loves the idea of trying to connect in other ways while they cannot do in-person exchanges.

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that maybe folks who have mentioned ideas could think about the details some more, and Ms. Thomas-Smith could email Chair Mitchell. They could maybe have something for October and send it from Mayor Hansel to the Mayor of Einbeck and the Chair of their delegation or committee. There could be a small program. It will take more legwork but there are some good ideas starting now. At the moment it seems like the exchanges are on pause until there is the possibility of travel again. Mayor Hansel replied yes, he knows people are traveling to Germany now from the US, but they have to quarantine.

2. Dedication of Einbeck's old synagogue meeting space to coincide with October's visit - delegation from Cohen Center (place on more time)

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that the October delegation is not happening and they will place this on more time. He continued that if Einbeck is going to do this dedication of the meeting space and will have a live stream, the PCC could promote that. It would be good if they could find out more or make that suggestion somehow. He asked if anyone had any other thoughts.

Councilor Giacomo asked if the actual dedication is being postponed, or just the PCC's involvement. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that there was a letter. Discussion ensued. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he thinks he saw something about this on one of Einbeck's pages but he cannot remember. He continued that they should look into this before October and see what is going on. Councilor Giacomo asked who had been communicating back and forth about that. Ms. Mattson replied that she remembers seeing an email from Jay Kahn, but that was a while ago. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he will touch base with Chair Mitchell and see if he was communicating with Einbeck folks about this, and he will have him update the PCC on the status of this.

b) Discuss Promotional Activities/Media Opportunities to Help Promote PCC Events and Exchanges – Dawn

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that Ms. Thomas-Smith forwarded some information to Ms. Mattson about this, just prior to the meeting. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that at the last meeting they spoke about the social media request form, and that was an opportunity to say why the PCC started the social media presence in the first place and what their goals and objectives were. That was created in 2015. She and Ms. Mattson were both designated administrators, but as she said last time, the more the merrier. The PCC would just need to define if they wanted to build in any kind of workflow from a content review or approval process. She imagines the Parks, Recreation, and Facilities (PRF) Department has an active social media presence and there are other organizations across the City that do this, so from a permissions perspective and a workflow perspective, if the PCC should be following a similar workflow or approval process it makes sense to do so and not try to reinvent the wheel. These are meant to be guidelines and informational and can be used for moving forward. Also, there is the authorization form for photo release/media consent. This was quick and easy. Maybe there is a simpler version they could look at and apply, say, from the PRF Department or Keene High School. On the other end of that, she left in a spot for if they wanted to revoke authorization for the future. It would be about defining the process for who the form gets submitted to and the record-keeping step, if people wanted to take away their consent.

Ms. Brunner shared Ms. Thomas-Smith's documents on the screen – the social media request form, and the media consent form. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that the social media request form was a requirement by the City in order to set up a social media account. She continued that the City Attorney signed off on it and a month or two later they created the account.

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that maybe they could update them with who has access. He continued that typically it is at the discretion of the administrators of the Facebook pages to post

proper content. They could update the IT Department (previously called the IMS Department) with the list of people who are currently administrators for the page and then they should be all set, in his opinion. They might find out differently when they forward the information to the IT Department, but they are definitely within the parameters of the intent and purpose. He continued that he thinks the media release is great and he thanks Ms. Thomas-Smith for putting it together. Right now it does not seem like they will be getting many in-person opportunities for photos but in the event that they do get opportunities for some photos to be released, it is great to have this release form. He can ask Andy Bohannon if the PRF Department has anything simpler, but this looks great. The next step would be to get approval from the City Attorney. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that the last has a placeholder, "Contact TBD with address here." She asked if she should edit/update that and re-send it. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that he needs to think about where that should go, and he will let her know what to put in there. He continued that the City Attorney might have input on that.

5) Communications

a) Letter from Einbeck Mayor Sabine Michalek, dated 6/29/2020

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that this letter is in the agenda packet. He continued that Mayor Michalek had responded to the PCC/Mayor Hansel with some nice words, about how they are looking forward to resuming the in-person exchanges next year. He asked if anyone had questions or comments about that.

6) Reports

a) Treasurer Report – Delene

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked Dr. White for the Treasurer's Report.

Dr. White stated that regarding the account that is not the appropriations account, \$18,765 is the current balance. She continued that the only change is a \$4.99 transaction for the greeting card that they purchased. It was a retirement card from November 2019.

Councilor Giacomo made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Thomas-Smith seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

7) New Business

a) Fundraising Ideas

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked if anyone had any ideas to share. Ms. Thomas-Smith thanked Dr. White for creating the survey. She continued that it is a great start. The questions made sense. She would suggest adding the logos, which she herself would be happy to do, and she suggests they provide an open-ended question like "Do you have any more comments or feedback?" so people have the opportunity to do some storytelling.

Dr. White stated that she could have asked more questions but she wanted to keep the survey short so it does not overwhelm people, but at the same time she wants the survey to be effective for communicating the PCC's impact to the City Council. She continued that she likes Ms. Thomas-Smith's idea to add an open-ended question. She was hoping that the "describe your experience" question (#2) would be open-ended but she can rephrase it, to encourage people to share their stories and experiences. Testimonials from people would help, so the PCC is not just sharing numbers of how many people participated, but showing that people have enjoyed their experiences and sharing the positives that people got out of it.

Councilor Giacomo stated that just a catch-all question at the end would be good, in addition to question #2. He continued that the response to #2 might be more factual, such as: "I visited and did [this] and stayed with [family]." Having a more colorful question at the end, for someone to give more of a picture of what they actually got out of it, would give people a chance to gush a little if they really enjoyed it. Maybe the PCC should let people know their feedback/snippets might be used to further support this program's future, or be used in a letter to the City Council. That would be a good disclaimer to have.

Dr. White replied that she will work on adding that one item. She asked if they should revisit it at the next meeting. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that Dr. White can send Ms. Mattson another draft and Ms. Mattson can share it with the group.

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that he thought all the questions were great and he agrees with Councilor Giacomo about giving people the opportunity to gush a bit. He continued that maybe they could also give people the opportunity to share photos. He could set up a Google Drive or other online location for people to upload photos to. Ms. Thomas-Smith stated that Google Forms allows that if people are logged in. She continued that regarding distribution, if they put the survey on social media or the City website, maybe they could add a request for people's email addresses.

Councilor Giacomo stated that he has another recommendation: regarding the survey question "Would you recommend participation as a host to others?", he thinks most people who went on the delegation ended up hosting others, but they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. He'd change it to something like "Participation as a host or delegate," so they capture everyone.

Vice Chair Schoefmann thanked Dr. White for her work. Dr. White stated that she thinks she has a way to add a link to the survey for people to upload photos; she will check. Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that everyone on the committee could take the survey for a test run and see how it works out.

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked if anyone else has fundraising ideas to share. He continued that this will be good as a potential fundraiser and just to raise general awareness, and bring past participants back in.

Dr. White stated that she just remembered, last time they talked about the possibility of having a “donate” button. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that he had probably volunteered to research that but he has not done so. Dr. White asked if anyone knows if it is okay to put in. Vice Chair Schoefmann replied that he will work on getting that answer, probably with Ms. Mattson’s help. Ms. Thomas-Smith replied that her guess is that people would be able to send checks instead of sending money online. It could get big real quick. That is something to consider for the future. They have 501c3 status. They could say “we always welcome support” and craft language welcoming people to send donations. Dr. White replied that she will work on it without changing the language too much and see what people think.

8) Next Meeting – October 13, 2020

Vice Chair Schoefmann stated that their homework is doing some outreach to the Einbeck folks.

9) More Time:

- a) Review Rules of Order & Compare with Other Advisory Boards – Samples Attached**
- b) Student Exchange – Update on Postponement - John**

Vice Chair Schoefmann asked Mayor Hansel if he thinks they need to discuss the Rules of Order. Mayor Hansel replied no, it is not very time sensitive and they can keep it on more time.

10) Adjournment

There being no further business, Vice Chair Schoefmann adjourned the meeting at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Edits submitted by,
Helen Mattson, Staff Liaison